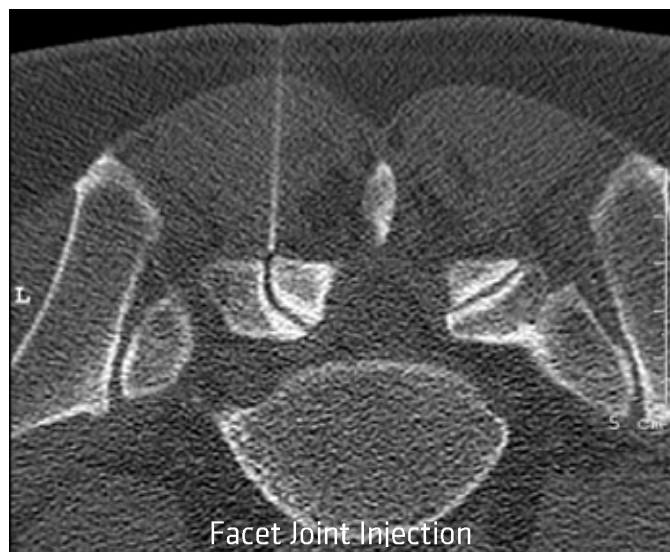
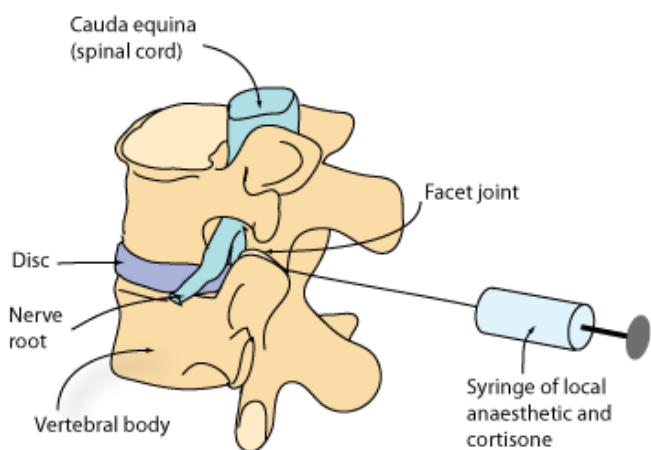


## Facet Joint Injection

Facet joints are small joints of the spine that provide stability and help guide motion. They are found in the neck (cervical), upper back (thoracic) and lower back (lumbar). They can become painful as a result of arthritis, injury or mechanical stress.



2. Treatment – The steroid injection can reduce inflammation and provide long lasting pain relief, from weeks to months.

### Procedure

With this procedure local anaesthetic and cortisone are injected into the facet joint. The procedure is performed by a radiologist using a CT scan to guide the needle into the correct space. The patient lies face down on the CT table and the back area is cleaned using an antiseptic solution. The area is injected with a small amount of local anaesthetic to numb the area followed by placement of a small needle into the facet joint, using the CT scan to check the position. An x-ray dye (contrast) may also be used to confirm the position of the needle. A mixture of local anaesthetic and steroid is injected. Multiple injections may be required. This may be uncomfortable for a short period of time while the anaesthetic takes effect. The procedure usually takes about 15-30 minutes plus recovery time.

### Are there any risks or side effects?

There are risks associated with any form of treatment. The general risk is low, but includes:

- Discomfort at the injection site.
- Mild increase in pain following the injection (probably a temporary pressure effect of the injection).
- Very rare cases nerve damage (due to trauma, the medication, infection or bleeding).
- Allergic reaction to the medication.

### Why a facet joint injection?

There are usually two reasons to perform a facet block:

1. Diagnosis – If the local anaesthetic in the injection relieves the pain then it suggests that the facet joints are the source of the pain.



### Post Procedure

- It is preferable to have someone take you home.
- Pain Relief may be temporary (4-6 hours) after which the local anesthetic effect wears off. If cortisone has been injected this may take up to a week to work.
- You may be given a pain relief chart to fill out. Please take the completed chart to your next appointment with your treating doctor.
- There may be a slight soreness or bruising at the needle site. Paracetamol and or ice may provide some comfort if required.
- You may experience an increase in pain and some stiffness initially, but this usually wears off after 48 hours.
- You should not participate in strenuous activity or exercise for 48 hours to one week depending on your treating doctor's instructions. They will also advise you on how best to resume pre-treatment activity levels.
- If you experience any fever, localised heat, swelling or increasing pain more than 48 hours after the injection you should call our clinic or consult your doctor without delay

### Please bring to your appointment

Please bring your referral from your doctor along with the following:

- Medicare Card
- Pension/Concession Card
- Previous films

### Things we need to know from you

Please inform the Radiology staff of any of the following:

1. If you are allergic to any medications, anaesthetic agent or X-Ray contrast
2. If you are not feeling well or wish to cancel please ring immediately (someone else can be offered your appointment time).

Female Patients: Please let us know if you are pregnant or suspect you may be or if you are breastfeeding

### Concerns

It is important you understand why and how we will be assisting you. Please feel free to contact our friendly staff at any time if you have any questions or concerns on [03 9420 1700](tel:0394201700).

### Find Us

We are situated in the new AAMI Park. Free on-site parking available for our patients- enter via Entrance F and continue to Car Park F.

